



Beyond Compliance: Professional Growth Planning

One defining characteristic of an effective educator is having a growth mindset for both students and self. Growth requires educators to reflect on the connection between instructional practices outlined in [Kentucky's Framework for Teaching \(KyFFT\)](#) and student learning outcomes.

Required sources of evidence in Kentucky's Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES), self-reflection and professional growth planning (PGP) are designed to personalize this learning for teachers. August is the perfect time for teachers and principals to assess needs and develop a strong learning plan for this school year through the professional growth planning cycle:

- Teachers reflect on current growth needs and identify an area of focus.
- Teachers and principals collaborate to develop a goal and action steps.
- Teachers implement the plan and regularly reflect on progress and impact.
- Teachers modify action items as appropriate and based upon reflection throughout the year.
- Teachers conduct summative reflection on process to discuss with principal at end of year, based on questions such as:
 - Did I meet or make progress toward PGP goal?
 - What did I learn from the process?
 - How did I grow as a result of implementing the plan?
 - What comes next?

Professional growth planning begins with self-reflection. It includes an honest assessment of the effectiveness of instructional planning, lesson implementation, content knowledge, and beliefs and dispositions based upon multiple sources of data. To gather pertinent information, you might consider:

- Administering a student perception or interest survey early in the year;
- Scheduling an observation with a principal or peer;
- Reviewing student growth goals or other student assessment data;
- Selecting areas of focus from the *KyFFT*;
- Investigating any special needs your students may have;
- Reflecting upon previous classroom observation feedback; and
- Identifying academic standards or instructional strategies to implement or refine.

In general, teachers should consider how their professional practices and decision making impact the learning of students, as well as their own professional learning and leadership skill development. Once the self-reflection is complete and an area of focus is identified, the teacher will continue to collaborate with the principal to develop goals, actions steps and measures, and to revise the plan which will be implemented, monitored and adjusted throughout the entire school year.



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In setting a goal for the PGP, teachers and principals should explore this question together: What changes in teacher practice will positively impact student learning?

When a goal has been identified and agreed upon, the next step is to develop a plan of action. What activities will best address the teacher's professional learning needs? Ideally, the plan will include specific strategies that are supported by collaboration, be embedded within daily classroom activities or the school environment (as much as possible), and always connect back to improved student learning. Examples might include professional learning communities, book studies, or social/professional networking for educators. Remember, the PGP goal remains the same throughout the year, but the action plan can be modified and adapted as necessary and informed by established benchmarks to ensure success.

Finally, teachers and principals will collaborate to determine whether the PGP has been met. How will success be measured? What benchmarks will guide the way? Measures of quantity, quality and/or impact may be used, but keep in mind that the measures must include reliable baselines, benchmarks, and indicators of goal attainment. Essentially, PGP measures indicate the starting point, interim progress toward the goal, and the ending point, and may include student work samples, classroom observations, lesson planning documents, to name a few.

Real collaboration between teachers and principals is the catalyst for substantial instructional change, and it spans the school year with professional growth planning and implementation. In August, it all begins when teachers self-reflect and develop a personalized PGP with their principals. Visit the [KDE website](#) for more information on the [PGP process](#). (Component 4E: *Growing and Developing Professionally*).
